

# Department of Conservation

## Resource Conservation District Watershed Coordinator Grant Program



*Merced River, Merced County*

Fourth Quarter Report  
August 2003

Department of Water Resources / CALFED Bay-Delta Program  
Interagency Agreement #4600002373



## Summary of Progress

The fourth quarter covered the period of April 1 to June 30, 2003. In July, quarterly status reports, summarizing watershed work plan progress, were submitted by all 18 grantees. The information received has been reviewed by the Department of Conservation (DOC) staff, and is presented in this report. The grantee reports are listed alphabetically and each is formatted as an individual fact sheet. For each grant, progress on objectives and performance measures are reported. Please refer to the individual grantee fact sheets for details.

We are pleased to report that the major accomplishments of the 18 coordinators thus far are as follows:

- ◆ **In 12 months, almost \$6.2 million in additional watershed funding has been obtained thus far by the watershed coordinators.** This amount is approximately \$696,390 more than the total reported last quarter. With \$514,000 paid out for grant costs to date, this represents a **12 to 1 return on investment**. This additional funding is the result of grant writing and fund-raising activities conducted by the coordinators in previous months. The coordinators continue to be highly successful in generating additional funding for watershed improvements, and numerous new proposals have been submitted this quarter.
- ◆ **Seven new watershed stewardship/working groups have been established** and existing groups continue to meet on a regular basis to plan watershed improvement strategies and activities.
- ◆ **Coordinators have facilitated the development of new MOUs to solidify cooperation and partnerships, and have assisted watershed groups in developing watershed management and monitoring plans.** Coordinators have also facilitated the development of numerous farm and ranch plans for individual landowners.
- ◆ **Coordinators continue to plan and develop on-the ground watershed improvement projects.** They have helped to design projects, obtain permits, and coordinate the implementation of such projects. These projects include, for example, watershed revegetation, stream bank restoration and sediment removal, wildlife pond installations, noxious weed eradication, and water-quality monitoring.
- ◆ **Many landowner-based workshops and tours have been held and more are being planned.** Topics have included erosion control and slope stabilization, trash removal days, ranch/farm water-quality planning and monitoring, ground water recharge, stewardship training, grey water system installations, irrigation monitoring, riparian replanting, and non-point source pollution reduction.

As evidenced in the following fact sheets, the watershed coordinators are meeting and exceeding objectives outlined in their work plans. There are six more months remaining in the grant program.

## Cachuma Resource Conservation District

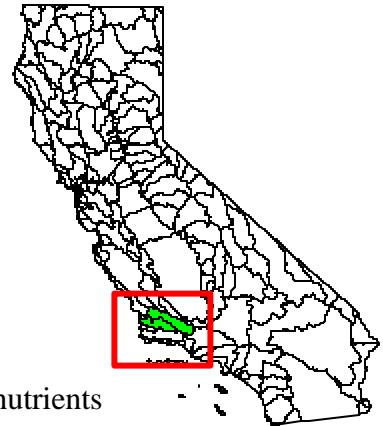
### Santa Maria River and Cuyama River Watershed

**Amount Funded:** \$68,500

**Match Provided:** \$45,179

**Additional Funding Obtained to Date:** \$80,000

**Watershed Coordinator:** Thomas Lockhart



**Watershed Goal:** To reduce off-site transport of water, sediment, and nutrients from farms and ranches.

### Watershed Coordinator Objectives and Progress

**Objective 1:** Assist three existing watershed working groups in implementing their watershed plans.

- Drafting a watershed plan that will be presented to the Oso Flaco Watershed Group in August 2003.
- Completed the San Antonio Creek Watershed Plan.
- Collecting information for the Carpinteria Creek Watershed Plan. Will begin writing the plan sometime in October 2003.
- Assisted in the development of the “Practical Streambank Restoration Workshop.” This 3-day conference highlighted bio-engineering solutions for failing streambank situations. More than 139 persons attended and 6 different sessions were presented, including a tour of 5 different field sites. The watershed coordinator led the field tours at the workshop.
- Sampled irrigation drainage water in 8 locations within the Oso Flaco Creek Watershed. This concludes a 12-month sampling effort.
- Conducted 34 irrigation evaluations, consisting of 24 turf-grass evaluations, 3 avocado orchards, 3 drip-irrigated vegetable fields and 4 vineyards.
- Established a test site in a broccoli field to determine when to apply nitrogen fertilizer. The evaluation will use the nitrate quick test to evaluate the data.
- Surveyed three stream reaches of the Carpinteria Creek.
- Completed the topographical map that will be used in removing the Lions Club low-water crossing in Carpinteria Creek.



*Vineyard Manager speaking about his riparian trees planting for stream bank stabilization during a recent tour*

**Performance Measure 1.1:** Produce three watershed plans, which include conservation of water quality and water quantity.

- The Oso Flaco Creek Watershed Plan is 50% complete.
- The San Antonio Creek Watershed Plan is done.

**Performance Measure 1.2:** Decrease nitrate concentration by 20% in Oso Flaco Creek.

- A trail was set up to demonstrate the usefulness of the soil nitrate quick test in a broccoli field. The initial fertilizer application was omitted in the quick-test monitored portion of the field. Yield of the crop will be measured to see if fertilizer was lacking.

**Performance Measure 1.3:** Reduce sediment delivery into San Antonio Creek by 30%.

- The Draft San Antonio Creek Plan contains numerous recommendations that when implemented should reduce and prevent significant amounts of sedimentation.

**Performance Measure 1.4:** Improve steelhead passage in Carpinteria Creek by 50%.

- The removal of the low-water crossing will allow steelhead to access the upper portion of the creek.

**Objective 2:** Oversee the start-up of two additional watershed working groups.

- Presented the CRMP model to the Gaviota Creek watershed landowners group.
- Finished the preliminary erosion control plan for the Bradley Ranch subwatershed.
- Described CRCDD, NRCS, and UCCE programs and opportunities to flower growers and greenhouse operators in the southern coastal portion of Santa Barbara County and Northern Ventura County.
- Presented a preliminary erosion control plan to an avocado farmer in the Santa Monica Creek watershed.



*Grade Control Structure that was designed and built by the RCD on the Santa Rosan Creek*

**Performance Measure 2.1:** Draft two watershed plans, which include conservation of water quality and water quantity.

- Both the San Antonio Creek and the Oso Flaco Creek plans contain numerous water quality improvements and methods to conserve water.

**Performance Measure 2.2:** Improve conservation of water quantity and quality in two new watersheds by 20%.

- The irrigation mobile lab provided evaluations and educational outreach in the south coastal portion of Santa Barbara County and northern Ventura County.

# Central Modoc Resource Conservation District

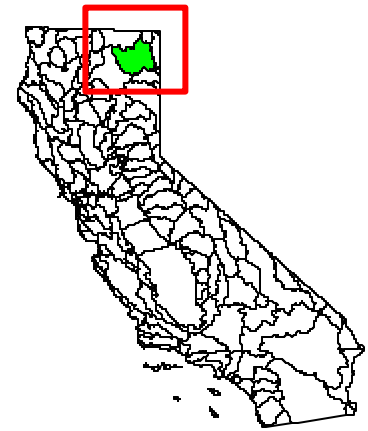
## Upper Pit River Watershed

**Amount Funded:** \$66,400

**Match Provided:** \$18,100

**Additional Funding Obtained to Date:** \$600,000

**Watershed Coordinator:** Cliff Harvey



### Watershed Goals, Objectives, and Progress

**Goal 1:** Contribute to watershed-wide assessment.

**Objective 1:** Support Pit River Watershed Alliance assessment project.

- Attended regularly scheduled Pit River Watershed Alliance (Alliance) meetings.
- Responded to requests for help from the contractor who is conducting the assessment.

*Performance Measure:* Documentation of district input to assessment drafts, participation in 9 team meetings.

- Since the first quarter the coordinator has attended seven team meetings.

**Objective 2:** Contribute to watershed wide GIS database

- The next GIS update will take place in late summer.

*Performance Measure:* Annual GIS Update, documentation of updates to SARE and ICE

**Goal 2:** Continue implementation of the CMRCD Monitoring Plan.

**Objective 1:** Collect, document and disseminate complete monitoring site data set for target parameters and locations.

- Summer monitoring efforts will begin in July.

**Objective 2:** Compile baseline vegetation data for project sites with emphasis on revegetation success and noxious weeds.

- Worked with NRCS botanists and staff to initiate botanical surveys for 3 different revegetation projects. The surveys will provide the baseline data necessary to assess the success of the revegetation efforts.

*Performance Measure:* Establish 10 monitoring sites, 50 independent photo points, and collect macroinvertebrate data for 10 tributaries.

**Goal 3:** Continued implementation of demonstration watershed restoration projects.



*Pit River, Modoc County*



**Objective 1: Initiate Proposition 13 Projects.**

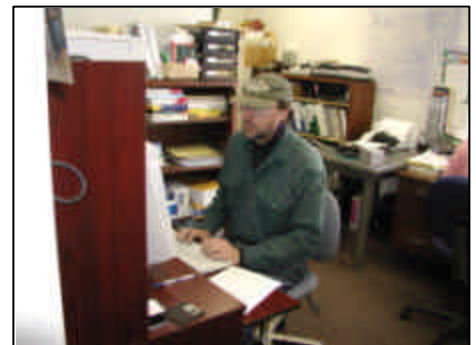
- The project coordinator hired to implement this project was dismissed after 9 weeks on the job. The search is currently underway to find a suitable replacement.

*Performance Measure:* Completed signed Prop. 13 contract.

- This performance measure was met when the Prop. 13 contract was signed and work commenced on Feb. 1, 2003.

**Objective 2: Initiate Cantara Foundation Projects**

- Began preparing permit applications for the South Fork Pit River Talbott Project.
- Facilitated the production, review, and selection of the final design for the Nader-Witcher Creek Restoration Project.
- Conducted a site visit with the landowner and the USFWS on the Bushey Ranch-Turner Creek project site to begin designing plans for the project.
- Worked with USFW to obtain an additional \$15,000 to fund bank stabilization excavations as part of the Bushey Ranch-Turner Creek Project. The additional funding will allow additional work, however the new work will require additional planning and permitting.
- Conducted site visits with the owners of the Heard Ranch and the Valena Ranch to narrow the range of revegetation test plots to six sites and to survey the construction of over 6000 feet of riparian fencing.
- Permits for the Weber Ranch-Parker Creek fish habitat structure project were approved at the regional and local level this quarter. The coordinator expects to receive the permits by the end of July. Construction is set to begin in late summer 2003.



*Cliff Harvey working on a grant application for Pit River Watershed improvement projects*

*Performance Measure:* Approved and signed contract; Submitted permit applications and initial CEQA/NEPA documentation; Draft project design.

- The Scope of Work and contract were finalized and signed on September 30, 2003.
- Permits applications have been submitted and approved for the Weber Ranch-Parker Creek Project.
- Project designs have been drafted and finalized for the Weber Ranch-Parker Creek fish habitat structure and the Nader-Witcher Creek Restoration Project.

**Objective 3: Develop New Project Proposals**

- Continue to work with the Pit River Tribe on the X-L Ranch to discuss potential projects. The coordinator submitted a \$750,000 concept proposal to fund a variety of projects including restoration projects on the X-L Ranch.

- Conducted a site visit at the Pit River Land and Livestock Ranch to discuss stream monitoring and a potential bank stabilization project. The landowner has requested help in developing a monitoring program and stream management plans. It is expected that staff from the Modoc National Wildlife Refuge will participate in this new partnership.
- Began developing a proposal to address bank stabilization and riparian corridor protection for nearly two miles of the South Fork Pit River.
- Submitted a draft Scope of Work to the SWRCB for a Prop. 13 Phase 2 contract.

*Performance Measure:* Production of approved project design alternatives for all projects.

**Goal 4:** Ensure coordination of District programs with other watershed stakeholders.

**Objective 1:** Continue and improve coordination of UPRWEPP Technical Advisory Committee.

- The coordinator was unable to attend the regular bi-monthly Pit River Watershed Alliance meetings and the Modoc County Noxious Weed Working Group meetings due to vacation and family leave. However, the coordinator maintained contact with Watershed Alliance and Weed Working Group members to ensure any concerns were addressed.
- Maintained routine communication with the Pit River Watershed Alliance watershed coordinator to provide any needed assistance.

*Performance Measure:* Minutes of 3 TAC meetings. Complete 6 TAC newsletters. Maintained TAC website link. Attend 8 meetings of PRWA, MNWWG, documentation of cooperation with PRWA coordinator.

- The coordinator has conducted 2 TAC meetings, completed 2 TAC newsletters, attended 5 Alliance meetings, and 4 Modoc County Noxious Weed Working Group meetings.

**Goal 5:** Ensure that all stakeholders are aware of and informed about watershed concepts and issues.

**Objective 1:** Link all CMRCD/UPRWEPP monitoring, assessment, and restoration projects to the CMRCD River Center education & outreach programs.

- Held a tour of past and current CMRCD watershed project sites. Twenty students and faculty from Shasta College and Feather River College attended the tour.

*Performance Measure:* Facilitate preparation of 6 CRWQMPs; Assist in three K-12 watershed programs; Assist in 6 outreach events; Coordinate stream restoration workshop; 54 site visits.

- The coordinator has assisted with developing an educational program for high school students, conducted one watershed restoration workshop, assisted in three outreach events and conducted 24 site visits.

**Goal 6:** Ensure continuing implementation of CMRCD/UPRWEPP vision and goals.

**Objective 1:** Obtain funding for new and continuing projects and programs.

- The coordinator submitted two concept proposals to the SWRCB. A proposal for a package of restoration projects was submitted for \$750,000. The second proposal for \$250,000 was submitted to fund the River Center.
- A supplemental fund of \$15,000 was received from USFW. This additional money will improve the RCD's ability to achieve its goals.

*Performance Measure:* Preparation and submission of competitive grant proposals, and development of viable Scope of Work/contract documents for awarded grants.

- The coordinator has submitted a total of six grant applications, finalized a Prop. 13 scope of work, finalized a Cantara Foundation scope of work and started work on a Prop. 13 phase II scope of work.

**Additional Funding Obtained/Applied For:**

The USFW provided an additional \$15,000 of funding for a bank stabilization project.

The coordinator submitted a proposal to SWRCB for \$750,000 to fund various watershed restoration activities. The coordinator submitted an additional concept proposal to SWRCB for \$250,000 to fund River Center activities.



## Central Modoc Resource Conservation District

Goose Lake, Upper & Lower Pit River Watersheds

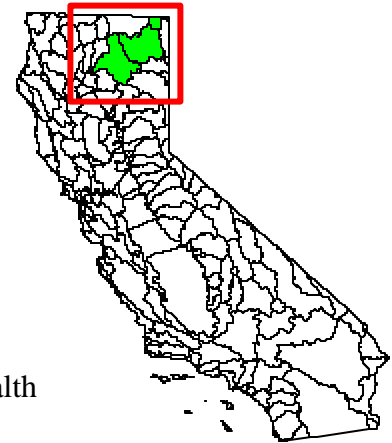
**Amount Funded:** \$62,500

**Match Provided:** \$23,400

**Additional Funding Obtained to date:** \$260,000

**Watershed Coordinator:** James Rickert

**Watershed Goal:** Achieve long-term economic and environmental health through active community participation.



### Watershed Coordinator Objectives and Progress

**Objective 1:** Improve communication among partners and stakeholders.

- The coordinator conducted two presentations this quarter regarding watershed Alliance goals, current activities and plans for future activities. Presentations were given to the Shasta County Board of Supervisors and the North Cal-Nevada RC&D.
- A \$5,000 grant was awarded by the Modoc National Forest to further develop and update the Pit River Watershed Alliance website.
- Distributed 70 Pit River Watershed Alliance brochures to introduce the Alliance to stakeholders within the watershed.
- Held several meetings with staff of the Pit River Tribe environmental office to discuss working collaboratively to meet common watershed goals.



*Pit River, Pittville Bridge,  
Pittville CA (5/03)*

**Performance Measure:** Obtain and secure a total of 35 signatories on the Memorandum of Understanding.

- Since the first quarter, the coordinator has obtained three new signatories including the High Mountain Hay Growers, the Modoc County Noxious Weed Working Group, and the Fall River Wild Rice Growers Cooperative.

**Objective 2:** Seek funding for Pit River Watershed Alliance to implement priority projects.

- Worked with the Pit RCD to develop a concept proposal to fund the second phase of an existing 319 grant. The proposal would fund a watershed coordinator for two additional years and provide funds for new riparian improvement projects on the Pit River.
- Submitted a grant proposal to the Community Technology Foundation of California to fund additional work on the Pit River Watershed Alliance interactive website.

**Performance Measure:** Assist writing five funding proposals for priority projects in cooperation with Pit River Watershed Alliance stakeholders.

- The coordinator has submitted nine proposals since the first quarter.

**Objective 3:** Coordinate Pit River Watershed Alliance projects.

- Initiated the Pit River Watershed Stewardship award project to help promote watershed conservation techniques among landowners.
- The coordinator completed a Scope of Work for a grant received by the Pit RCD to fund a watershed coordinator position and Pit River riparian restoration projects.
- Held meetings with landowners who will participate in the restoration projects funded by the Pit RCD grant. The coordinator worked with the landowners to develop plans and to address potential concerns.



*Ash Creek (Pit River Tributary and future restoration site), Modoc County*

**Performance Measure:** Three projects are identified.

#### **Additional Funding Applied For/Received:**

The coordinator submitted two new grant proposals this quarter. The first proposal was submitted to the Community Technology Foundation for \$15,000 to fund Watershed Alliance website improvements. The second proposal was submitted to the SWRCB for \$320,000 to fund the second phase of an existing water quality monitoring and riparian restoration project.

This quarter, three proposals that were submitted in previous quarters were selected for funding. The first grant was received from the Modoc National Forest. It will fund \$5,000 of watershed alliance website upgrades. The second grant was received from DWR for \$60,000 to fund a water quality monitoring coordinator. Finally, a third grant for \$82,000 was received from the Central Valley RWQCB to fund water quality monitoring laboratory and equipment costs.

## Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District

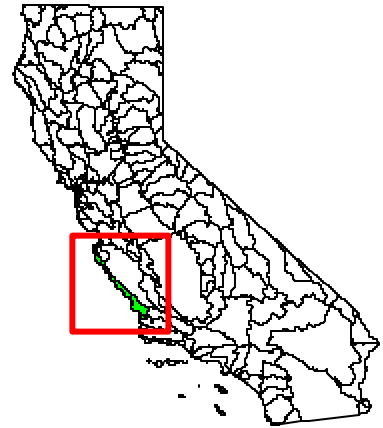
### Central Coastal Watershed

**Amount Funded:** \$60,024

**Match Provided:** \$80,459

**Additional Funding Obtained to Date:** \$167,000

**Watershed Coordinator:** Malcolm McEwen



**Watershed Goal:** Improve water use efficiency, ecosystem quality, and water quality in watersheds in the district.

### Watershed Coordinator Objectives and Progress

**Objective 1:** Provide assistance for implementation of conservation practices that improve water use efficiency, ecosystem quality, and water quality.

- Assisted three landowners in the Morro Bay watershed in obtaining services of engineers to design conservation practices.
- Designed a bank stabilization project on a tributary to Los Osos Creek.
- Began developing a conservation plan for the 580-acre Chorro Creek Ecological Reserve.
- Supervised a CCC crew performing vegetation maintenance on floodplain property owned by the District.
- Performed the annual inspection of the Dixon and Searcy agricultural conservation easements in the City of Arroyo Grande.



*Cheryl Zelus of NRCS assisting the WC in surveying an eroding drainage swale in the Morro Bay Watershed*

**Performance Measure:** Number of landowners that participate in Cooperative Extension short courses (# over two courses). Number and extent of conservation practices installed (10). Number of growers who receive irrigation system evaluations. Amount of funding obtained for funding conservation practices (funding for 10 practices).

- Contacted 15 landowners
- Installed four conservation practices to date
- Obtained one permit so far and working on developing a coordinated permitting program

**Objective 2:** Support education and outreach to landowners and agency staff.

- Gave a presentation in a field trip organized by the RWQCB to highlight range management conservation practices currently installed in the Morro Bay Watershed.
- Attended the Flood Control District Zone 1/1A Advisory Committee meetings

*Performance Measure:* Number of demonstration sites developed (2). Number of landowners who document or otherwise share the benefits of conservation practices (6). Number of people who participate in farm tours or field days (# over 3 tours). Number of regulatory referrals to the NRCS or the district (12).

- Established three demonstration projects on construction sites in Pismo Beach, Arroyo Grande, and Grover Beach.
- Conducted three tours throughout the watershed.
- Provided NRCS with a regulatory referral in Nipomo

**Objective 3:** Facilitate and improve coordination, collaboration, and assistance among governmental agencies, other organizations, and local watershed groups.

- Developed a draft proposal to the State Coastal Conservancy to develop a watershed-wide sediment management plan for Arroyo Grande Creek.
- Assisted the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County in finalizing the contract with DWR for funding a 2.5-acre restoration project on the banks of the Nipomo Creek.
- Produced a final draft of the Pismo Lake Watershed Management Plan.



*Examining a proposed bank stabilization project in Morro Bay Watershed*

*Performance Measure:* Number of watershed stewardship groups that form through assistance from the watershed coordinator (3). Number of RCD board members who participate in watershed stewardship groups (3). Number of landowners who participate in watershed stewardship groups (6). Amount of funding obtained by watershed stewardship groups through assistance from the watershed coordinator (3 proposals submitted).

- Conducted three education events
- Working on six farm/ranch plans

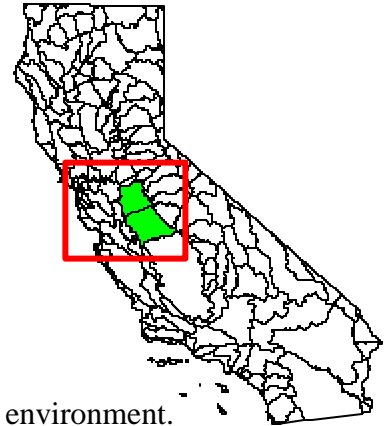
### **Additional Funding Obtained/Pending:**

Submitted three proposals:

- \$500,000 to the California State Water Resources Control Board requesting funds to provide technical assistance and cost sharing to landowners to install conservation practices within the Morro Bay Watershed.
- \$172,000 to the DFG requesting funds to remediate two barriers to steelhead movement within the Morro Bay Watershed.
- \$500,000 to the California State Water Resources Control Board requesting funds to acquire wetland conservation easements on properties in a floodplain at the base of Los Osos Creek.

## East Merced Resource Conservation District

Middle San Joaquin-Lower Merced-Lower Stanislaus (Lower Merced portion) & Middle San Joaquin-Lower Chowchilla Watersheds



**Amount Funded:** \$59,600

**Match Provided:** \$14,900

**Watershed Coordinator:** Teri Murrison

**Watershed Goal:** Preserve or enhance the Merced River and floodplain environment.

### Watershed Coordinator Objectives and Progress

**Objective 1:** Metamorphosis of Merced River Stakeholders (MRS) Group from a single project focus to a watershed group.

- Redesigned, updated and added content to MRS website.
- Planned and facilitated May and June MRS meetings.
- Attended and made presentations at several local community meetings seeking support for Bay-Delta proposals.
- Encouraged landowners to attend Bay Delta's Working Landscapes subcommittee for the Merced River Stewardship Program.
- Met with Upper Merced River watershed coordinators to discuss collaborating on future funding and project efforts.
- Submitted two SWRCB/CALFED grant proposals for bank stabilization and biological monitoring programs, and partnered with Sustainable Conservation on a proposal for permit coordination.



*Lower Merced Watershed Tour 2003*

*Performance Measures:* 1) MRS remains viable watershed group with average active participation of 35 stakeholders; 2) Provide staffing for 12 monthly meetings; 3) Adopt mission, goals and objectives by June 2003; 4) Participation of at least 15 MRS members at each of two field days with implementation of prescribed practices by five stakeholders after each event; 5) Submit at least three grant applications for continued funding of stakeholder group.

**Objective 2:** Implement voluntary individual water quality monitoring program on Lower Merced Watershed.

- Submitted one SWRCB/CALFED proposal for water quality education among K-12 and watershed communities.

*Performance Measures:* 1) Provide 30 stakeholders with water monitoring training and monitoring kits by August 2003 then complete a survey of same 30 stakeholders by October 2003 to verify that at least 10 have adopted BMPs for water quality by comparing monitoring results; 2) Submit at least one grant application to fund a school-based water quality monitoring project by May 2003.

**Objective 3:** Administer watershed coordinator grant program.

- Attended 2-week Bay Delta Authority Watershed Partnerships training in Napa.
- Conducted interagency advisory river project and funding strategy meeting.

*Performance Measures:* 1) Prepare and submit quarterly reports to DOC; 2) Attend CARCD annual meeting; 3) Submit at least one grant application for continued funding of watershed coordinator position.

**Additional Funding Obtained/Pending:**

<u>Proposal</u>	<u>Amount Requested</u>	<u>Status</u>
1. Coordinated Watershed, Citizen Monitoring & Education Program	\$517,560 from SWRCB	Pre-proposal under review
2. Baseline Biological Monitoring on Merced River	\$2,575,500 from CALFED	Pre-proposal under review
3. Bank Stabilization Feasibility Assessment	\$625,000 from CALFED	Pre-proposal under review